

My name is Petr Hejl, I am an RC hobby enthusiast, aerial videographer, and multi-rotor aircraft builder and operator. As someone with a good knowledge of operation of the unmanned aircraft actively involved in UAV community, I would like to offer a few opinions about the proposed CT Bill No. 5217, An Act Concerning Use Of Unmanned Aircraft.

I welcome the proposed definitions of Criminal use of an unmanned aircraft. I believe that clear rules that address privacy concerns and concerns about possible misuse of UAVs to cause harm are needed, and hopefully will help people make more educated decisions while exploring what this technology has to offer. It is a shared view amongst the UAV community that having sensible rules in place lessens the chance of someone with more money than commons sense causing some real damage or harm to others.

While the section of this bill addressing the law enforcement use addresses many important privacy concerns, I believe that it's definitions of permissible uses and handling of acquired information are leaving opening for a lot of possibly important evidence to be rendered useless. It is fairly impossible to avoid other objects, people, or places when using this technology (just as it is while using real aircraft, or surveillance cameras). However, it is not impossible to obstruct or blur other objects in video footage that is to be used as evidence. The rule to report emergency use and destroy any information containing objects not subject to the warrant within 48 hours may put unnecessary burden on law enforcement officers in the least desirable times (large scale emergencies). This section also seems to suggest that when someone else then law enforcement agent (e.g. hobbyist, firefighter) captures footage of someone committing a crime (e.g. looting, vandalism), that footage may not be used by law enforcement or as an evidence in court.

I am surprised that this bill does not mention the use of UAVs for Emergency and Fire Management services. This is perhaps the most important field where this technology can truly be a lifesaver and help keep emergency and fire responders out of harms way (most recent example is an explosive storage fire incident in Branford CT). I believe that introducing a state bill concerning UAVs without any mention of use in this field is a missed opportunity to address something that should be a priority to all of us. As someone who personally demonstrated the abilities to fire responders and emergency coordinators, I wish I had a good way to convey all the enthusiasm and support received from them.

I applaud the call on The Commissioner of Transportation to introduce the regulation of the use of UAVs in the airspace not regulated by the FAA. Myself and many others in the AV community would welcome clear, sensible rules, by which we can be licensed, registered, insured, just like many other businesses. UAVs are a 21st century technology and a multi-billion dollar industry, it is encouraging to see the legislation that hopefully moves us another step in a dialogue about how to safely integrate UAVs into our daily lives.

Please, feel free to contact me If you'd like to learn more about this technology and it's possible uses.

Thank you.

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